

Remarks

The Office Action mailed September 20, 2007 has been reviewed and the comments therein were carefully considered by the Applicant. Claims 35-45 are currently pending. By this response claims 1-4, 7-12, 14-20, and 22-34 have been cancelled. In addition, claims 35-42 have been amended and new claims 43-45 are presented. No new matter has been introduced into the application by this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowable subject matter of claims 38 and 39. In this response, Applicant has rewritten claims 38 and 39 into independent format including all of the elements of the base and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 38 and 39 are in condition for allowance and that dependent claims 35-37 and 40-45 which depend from one of independent claims 38 and 39 are allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they ultimately depend.

Rejections

Claims 16-19, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Stahl (5,422,173).

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-12, 14, 24-27, 29, 32, 34-35, 37, and 40-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Freno et al. (4,591,521) in view of Cahill (5,123,870).

Claims 4, 12, 14, 27, and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kisha et al. (P.G. Pub. 2003/0054137) in view of Stahl (5,422,173).

Claims 8 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Freno et al. (4,591,521) in view of Cahill (5,123,870) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Stahl (5,422,173).

Claims 15, 30, 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kisha et al. (P.G. Pub. 2003/0054137) in view of Mahn, Sr. et al. (4,971,644).

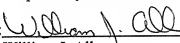
Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stahl (5,422,173) in view of Mahn, Sr. et al. (4,971,644).

Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stahl in view of either Conrad (3,662,878) or Castro, Jr. (5,906,006).

In order to advance prosecution, Applicant has cancelled claims 1-4, 7-12, 14-20, and 22-34 and has amended claims 35-42 rendering the above rejections moot. Applicant reserves the right to file the cancelled claims in a subsequent continuation application. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should it be deemed necessary to facilitate prosecution of the application.

Date: November 8, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
William J. Allen
Registration No. 51,393
BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.
10 South Wacker Drive,
Suite 3000
Chicago, IL 60606
Telephone: 312-463-5000
Facsimile: 312-463-5001